Temperance – 1926

DIPLOMATS ARE "HALF NEGRO"

Washington, D. C.—All foreign diplomats assigned to the United States would be stripped of their "diplomatic immunity" and subjected to enforcement of the Prohibition laws under terms of a bill sponsored in the Senate yesterday by Senator Cole Blease, (D.), South Carolina.

Due to its broad terms the bill would apply all American laws to foreigners whether they were temporary visitors here or sent in an official capacity. The American criminal code would also be made to apply to the foreign embassies, legations and consular offices just as they do to the homes of Americans.

Although Blease made no statement when introducing the bill, it was apparent that it was linked to his recent attack upon diplomats, who, he charged, were "feeding liquor to American women, debauching them and keeping open houses of ill fame."

Protests were heard from the Latin-American embassies when Senator Blease criticised the arrest of several young men and women for violation of the prohibition law. Attaches of several of the embassies were in the cafe with liquor in their possession, but were not taken by the police.

Blease said:

"Why has not the cotton-mill boy the same right (to carry liquor around in his pocket) as some little half-Negro from a foreign country over here should have?"

COLORED WOMAN HONORED BY W. C. T. U.

The honor of Organizer Emeritus was conferred upon Mrs. Rosetta E. Lawson of this city, formerly national organizer, at the National Convention of the Women's Christian Temperance Union recently held in Detroit, Mich. A letter from Mrs. Ella A. Boole, president of the National W. C. T. U., who was elected president to succeed Miss Anna A. Gordon, who was made president of the World's W. C. T. U. at Edinburgh, Scotland, last July, was received this week by Mrs. Lawson, informing her that the honor had been conferred upon her.

Mrs. Rosetta E. Lawson served as a National Organizer of the W. C. T. U. for 25 years.

BLEASE BRINGS BACK DAYS OF BEN TILLMAN

Unlimbers Heavy Guns on Foreign Diplomats.

REGARDS TO PROHIBITION

Declares Dry Agents Are "Dirty Spies"—Diplomats Called "Little Half-Niggers From Foreign Countries."

BY FRASER EDWARDS.

(Universal Service Staff Correspondent.)

WASHINGTON, Jan. 15.—Shattering all precedent for fiery oratory, Senator Cole Blease of South Carolina, today stunned the Senate with a fiery attack on foreign diplomats in Washington, charging them with "feeding liquor to American women, debauching them and keeping houses of ill-fame." His remarks were made during an address on the World Court.

Thundering and hammering his desk, Blease directed his most vitriolic denunciation at an unnamed diplomat, who he charged, served "likker"—as he called it—to an American girl in a Washington cabaret recently and escaped under diplomatic immunity when the girl was arrested.

Blease had particular reference to a recent police raid on a cabaret. cabaret. Two men besides the birl were arrested for possession of liquor. The diplomat referred to by Blease handed the police a silver flask of liquor along with his diplomatic credentials. Both were promptly returned to him.

"One of these days," shouted Blease, "one of these foreigners will sneak upon the president and stab him in the back with a stilleto, or he will feed him poison.

"Then instead of punishing this foreigner, we'll send him back to his country. And over there, they'll say that because he killed a 'one-horse' American'—that's no reflection on the president—he should be made an ambassador as a reward.

"That's the attitude of these foreign diplomats toward Americans and that's what we are leading up to with this diplomatic immunity."

Blease lived up to the reputation of being a "fire-eater" that preceded him to the Senate and his speech brought a flood of memories to senators who had heard "Pitchfork Ben" Tillman of South Carolina; Jeff Davis of Arkansas, and Tom Watson of Georgia.

It was the first time that Blease has really "cut loose" since he came to the Senate. Senators about him smiled when he began, but their expressions became serious as he denounced diplomats as "little half-niggers from foreign countries."

Dominates Senate.

Immaculate in a gray sack suit, gray bow tie, his iron-gray hair rising in a huge pompadour, Blease dominated the Senate for more than two hours. He shouted until his face became flushed and his eye-glasses were dashed from his nose by the violence of his gestures.

The inequalities of prohibition enforcement were scathingly assailed by Blease, who declared:

"The ambassadors get immunity. Why hasn't the cotton hill boy who works from daylight to dark the same privilege of carrying a flask as some little half-nigger from a foreign country?

"These foreigners bring their liquor by the truck load from Baltimore to have their fun. They have their parties and drink openly, feed liquor to American women, debauch them and keep houses of ill-fame.

"But what of the poor cab driver, out in the rain, wet and cold? He buys a half-pint and goes to his room to take a drink to warm his body. A dirty spy, calling himself a prohibition agent, looks in the window, grabs the poor man and locks him up. Then he is railroaded to the rock pile for 30 days.

"Alongside of this law-breaker is the ambassador. He wasn't arrested. The judge says: 'Good morning, immune.'

"The ambassador drank liquor in a public place. It was a noted public restaurant. He had violated our laws and had betrayed our women, but he goes free under international law. But the cab driver an dthe girl who took a drink go to jail.

"Good God! What a country!"

Blease said that he had been charged in South Carolina with "carrying liquor on his hip," and added:

"I never carried much, but I did drink it."

The fiery southerner declared that the enforcement was a mockery when bootleggers invaded the capitol itself to solicit trade. He said:

"These bootleggers come into the Senate office building soliciting trade. They come into the House office building and even under the very dome of the capitol. And yet some people say we have prohibition?"

His voice vibrant with emotion, Blease concluded scornfully:

"Yes, we have prohibition only for the poor devils who haven't got the money to buy liquor."

"MORE RACE MEN NEEDED ON PROHIBITION FORCES"

WASHINGTON, D. C., (Press News Service)—Before the senate sub-committee on the Judiciary in the "wet and dry" hearing, Dr. I. Garland Penn, Cincinnati, Ohio made plea for the appointment of more Negroes as assistant United States district attorneys and prohibition enforcement officers as an aid toward stricter and more general enforcement of the Volstead Act and the Eighteenth Amendment. Said he, "Negro bootleggers are in most cases affiliated with white bootleggers and apprehension of both by Negro officers is more likely than otherwise." The fine work of former assistant United States district attorney Beatty of Cincinnati was referred to by Dr. Penn in the apprehension and conviction of the many Cincinnati police who were sent to the Atlanta federal prison. The fact was also stressed that Negroes were interested in the enforcement of all of the amendments to the Constitution to repeal of the Eighteenth because of minority insistence upon violation, and inability to enforce the same would be the same argument for the repeal of the Fifteenth. The Charlotte, N. C., Observer stated that Secretary Penn was one of the most interesting witnesses appearing before the Senate committee.

Arrests in Atlanta Show Big Jump Under Prohi Law Witness Tells Senators

Stanley Shirk Declares Liquor Arrests in This City Have Increased From 3,000 to 8,000.

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS.

Washington, April 13.—A phalanx of statistics was marshalled before the senate prohibition committee today by the wets in an effort to show that drunkenness has increased under the bone dry laws.

The city of Atlanta, Ga., was cited as one example where arrests for drunkenness increased since the dry law became effective.

Resuming their side of the case after a day's interlude devoted to dry testimony, the wet leaders put on the stand Stanley Shirk, research director of the [illegible] league, who produced scores of charts, maps and statistical tables from which he deduced that in 457 cities and towns arrests for drunkenness increased from 258,974 in the first year of prohibition to 565,026 in 1924, four years later.

Arrests Increased.

In 350 places, according to these figures, arrests for drunkenness totaled 506,737 in 1914 and 498,752 in 1924.

"When we consider that drunkenness generally has already increased to the pre-prohibition level and that drunken drivers and drunken children

Steady Increase Shown in Arrests For Drunkenness Under Volstead Law

have increased far above anything ever known before in this country," said Shirk, "we cannot escape the conclusion that the Volstead act has utterly failed to do what it was intended to do, namely, promote temperance and sobriety.

"Moreover, since conditions have become worse, not better, each year and with the 'next generation' drinking as never before, there seems to be no hope that the Volstead act in its present drastic form will accomplish its purpose in the long run.

Wise Restrictive Law.

"From the experience, before national prohibition, of the states which had restrictive laws, from the experience of the whole country during the restrictive years 1918-1919 and from the experience of the Canadian provinces, we believe that a greater degree of temperance can be attained by a wise restrictive law than by a bone-dry law which does not command the respect of a large part of the people.

"We are also of the firm conviction that such a policy of wise restriction would have the incidental advantage of eliminating almost entirely the scandalous corruption and bribery of public officials, would stop the growth of the bootlegging millionaire class, would check disrespect for law, and would, in addition, produce a handsome national revenue."

Julien Codman, counsel for the wets, interrupted to have it noted on the record that the Moderation league "is a temperance organization."

"I assume that is taken for granted," said Senator Harreld, republican, Oklahoma, the only member of the committee present at that time.

Drunken Drivers.

Resuming his statement, Mr. Shirk said that perhaps "the most curious result of national bone dryness is the remarkable increase in the number of drunken drivers."

"The police departments of the principal cities have been interrogated and many which classify arrests for operating a vehicle while intoxicated have responded to our inquiry," he added. "These replies show a remarkable uniformity. The figures, when plotted on charts, show curves which are almost flat before the Volstead period, and thereafter shoot skyward at an astonishing angle.

"In New York city the arrests from 1916 to 1919 averaged 161. In 1920, the first dry year, they rose to 334, dropped slightly in 1921, and then skyrocketed to 944 by 1924.

"Chicago shows substantially the same result. Arrests there increased 140 per cent. Washington shows an increase of 1,062 per cent; in Milwaukee the rise was 2,554 per cent; Boston, 364 per cent; Scranton, Pa., 578 per cent; Providence, R. I., 244 per cent.; Atlanta, 500 per cent; Worcester, Mass., 448 per cent; New Haven, Conn., 713 per cent; Hartford, Conn., 378 per cent; Minneapolis, Minn., 916 per cent."

Points to Atlanta.

Taking up a challenge of Wayne B. Wheeler for the wets to point to a single city where conditions were better under the beer and wine regime than under the bone dry law, Shirk pointed to Atlanta. Arrests for intoxications there dropped from between 6,000 and 7,000 in 1907, he said, to between 2,000 and 3,000 in 1917, when citizens of Atlanta could import beer, wine and some ardent spirits. After the federal law became effective, he continued, the arrests mounted steadily until they reached 8,000 in 1925.

"Don't you think that was due rather to a let down in state enforcement?" asked Senator Harreld.

"Well, I hardly think so," Shirk replied. "The people want true temperance and will go a long way to get it, but they do not get it under bone dry laws."

Letter from Marietta.

The witness read a letter from Martin F. Amorous, of Marietta, near Atlanta, telling of changed conditions under the Volstead act. Armorous wrote, it was explained, at the request of Governor Wellborn, of the Atlanta Federal Reserve bank, with whom Shirk first communicated.

With the coming of the Volstead era, the letter said, "a host of bootleggers sprang up, and illicit distilleries were established in every county in Georgia at places never dreamed of before," while "minors and others became regular customers of bootleggers."

The committee was told by Shirk that Birmingham and Richmond had the same experiences when bone dry prohibition became effective.

Shirk read a photostat of a letter from Police Chief Stroebel, of Reading, Pa., declaring there had been a great increase in intoxication among youths. He said he knew of children being taken from classrooms "dead drunk" and that hip flasks were carried by young folks at most dances and parties.

Boys and Girls Drink.

Shirk said an increase in drinking among boys and girls had "become common knowledge" but added there was a "paucity of authoritative statistics on the subject."

"The police department of Washington, D. C., however, has kept records of the arrests of young people for drunkenness," he continued. "Arrests of persons under 22 years old average 44 a year for the four pre-prohibition years 1914-1917. A bone dry law was enacted for Washington before national prohibition became effective, and immediately youthful drunkenness increased. In 1918 it rose to 73 and by 1924 had reached 282.

"Arrests for drunkenness of persons of all ages meanwhile merely rose to the pre-prohibition level, thus demonstrating that, relatively as well as absolutely, drunkenness among young people increased enormously. This condition in Washington merely confirms what is known to exist in the rest of the country."

Wrote Police Chiefs.

Replying to Senator Harreld, Shirk said his organization had obtained its figures by writing to police chiefs in all places over 5,000 population.

"Why did you pick Guthrie and Lawton in my state?" asked Senator Harreld.

"The police chiefs in those towns were the only ones to reply."

The witness went on to say that the survey showed conditions in former wet states to be about the same as in 1914, while in states which had some form of a state prohibition "conditions are worse today under the bone dry Volstead act than they formerly were under their own state dry laws."

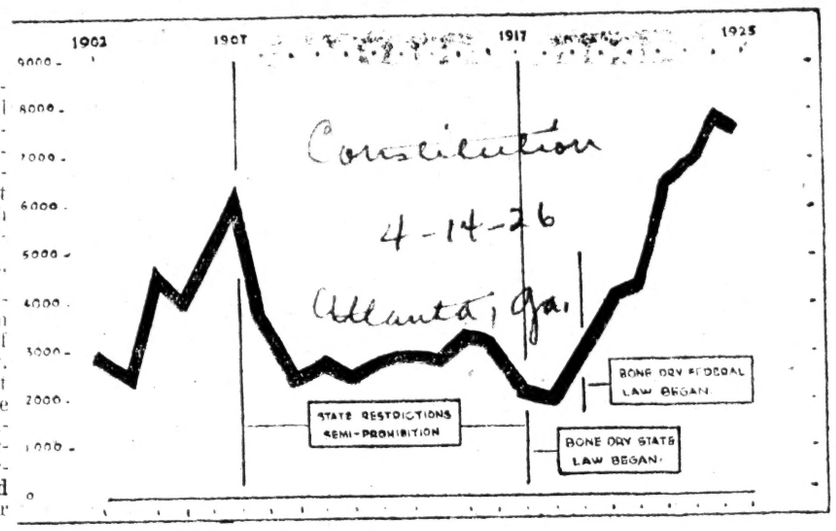
"Perhaps one reason for this great increase in drunkenness in the 'dry' states," he said, "is that most of these so-called 'dry' states were not really so—but were, in the main, merely restrictive."

STAND ON PROHIBITION DEFENDED BY RITCHIE.

Washington, April 13.—(AP)—Governor Ritchie, of Maryland, pointed to the principles of Thomas Jefferson and to the bill of rights in defending his opposition to the prohibition law in an address here tonight at a Jefferson league dinner, which was attended by a number of prominent democrats.

"Even if I were a minority of one," he said, "still in the name of temperance and of the individual freedom which is guaranteed the citizenship of this land, I would oppose that law. And to those who question my right to do this, while still revering the constitution of my country, I summon the memory of Thomas Jefferson when he demanded the first article of our bill of rights as a shield against intolerance and a sword for the conquest of liberty."

Governor Ritchie declared that Jefferson put freedom of the press first among the essentials of political freedom, and that he never wavered in his faith that "this world was not made for Caesar but for the common man."



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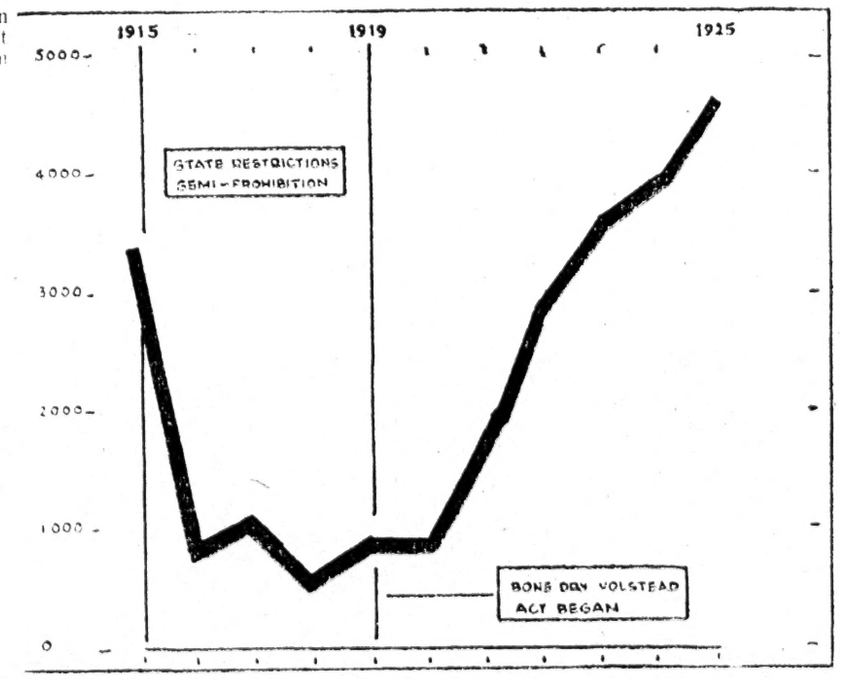

BIRMINGHAM.

Above charts were submitted in connection with testimony presented Tuesday before senate subcommittee on prohibition. Graphs show figures for drunkenness under modified and bone-dry laws.

Temperance — 1926

THE ATTITUDE OF THE COLORED AMERICAN TO THE VOLSTEAD LAW OR PROHIBITION

The most lively and stirring theme before the American people today in state and Church, is the Volstead Act or the 18th Amendment to the Federal Constitution. That the ultimate fate of this humane and beneficent act should even seem to rest in the balance after the experimental period of a few years is a very sad commentary on our boasted progress, proud civilization, and even Christianity. For whatever else might be said, this act per se has been more fruitful of good to all the people of the country, and has proven to be more far-reaching in its benignant effects than any other that has found its way to the statute books, and has richly earned a place as part of the organic law of the land. None more wise and important has been enacted into law within a centary perhaps.

There are those in our group who firmly believe this act has come in the evolution of the divine plan to purge and purify the American people, hence, it cannot long rest in the balance, if at all, neither go backward nor miscarry. It must and will meet the divine purpose, to wit, the deliverance of the most progressive and aggressive group of the human family—the people of the United States—from the thraldom of the rum demon—finally the world.

It is quite natural and a thing to be expected, that the secular element of the country should entertain varying views and divide on the subject of prohibition, hence, break up into hostile and madly contending camps. The fight when confined to the realm of politics gathers more than passing notice and interest as it promises a decidedly temporary advantage or disadvantage to the pros and cons.

For already men are translating the retention or abrogation of the Volstead law into national issues that will overshadow all others in the next Presidential campaign. Prohibition thus employed largely loses its moral force and effect and is degraded into a matter of political expediency.

But here is a new world wonder. The church of Jesus Christ seems almost as evenly and hopelessly divided as any other organized body, if we are to credit current press reports. The clamor for some form of modification or even the repeal of the Volstead law rings out as loud and clear from some quarters of the Church as from any unholy camp of the world. It seems to this lay writer that if this subject had but the single, saving element, to wit, the lifting of American manhood and womanhood into a higher and purer atmosphere, the Church, the Christian Church—ought to be able without scruple, bent or bias, to present a united front and stand full four square to the heavens. The wonder becomes more wonderful when one considers the social, economic, civic and the less noticeable values, blessings and benefits that fall into the lap of all the people following in the wake of temperate living whether forced or voluntary.

But I have gone very far afield generalizing, and must get back to my chosen theme—The Attitude of the Colored American to the Volstead Law or Prohibition.

When it comes to the matter of violating the prohibition law, I freely and frankly confess, with shame and confusion of face, that the colored American can't take to himself very large comfort, while pointing a scornful finger into the face of some other with the taunt, "holier than thou."

Yet since in any local or country-wide issue, the final settlement of which vitally affects the whole people, the man of color is kept under closest surveillance, and actions are carefully watched and subjected to critical scrutiny, his attitude to any such issue should be made up on facts and evidence. What are the facts and evidence before the court of public opinion in making up his attitude to the 18th Amendment? He seems possessed of an insatiable appetite and an inordinate desire for intoxicants. His dispositon to drink to excess is almost well-nigh proverbial. In addition to this the frequency with which he is caught in charge of an illicit still, watching a blind tiger, with small quantities of whiskey on his person, haled into court, takes a sentence, a fine or both, and thus earns free publicity through daily press reports, all go very far in determining popularly his attitude to the 18th Amendment. I am not inclined to enter into a discussion of the fairness or unfairness of thus determining his attitude; but since there are facts more germane and bearing more decidedly upon the matter under consideration, they ought to be allowed and duly credited.

That such facts are available and adducible ought to cheer the man of color, his friends and all truth-loving and fair-minded people. Any just and fair determination of the attitude of the colored American to the Eighteenth Amendment, must take into account, primarily, his activities in connection with the manufacture of contraband liquors. Here it needs only to be noted and said, if he figures at all, it is as a laborer, and hence, becomes nothing more than the dead machinery harnessed in the service of some master mind. His part the country round, therefore, as a manufacturer in violation of law is negligible.

In the second place, his connection with and interest in the illicit sale and dispensation are as little worthy of serious notice, as his participation in the manufacture. If he enters the field of trade at all, he can come in one or two ways: he must enter either as employe, or is duped in under the delusion that sooner or later it will prove to be "a gold brick." In either case he almost invariably becomes a willing tool of someone "higher up."

Third, when it comes to the matter of administering and enforcing the prohibition provision, the colored American stands eliminated and is not encouraged to cherish even the faintest hope of a look-in. In this respect all doors seem permanently closed in his face. From these important and significant points of view, it would seem that he has not played the leading role in violating the prohibition law, nor does he share largely the responsibility for failure in the law to meet the ends of its enactment. The question of obeying or violating the prohibition law becomes one purely and simply of patriotism, morals and religion as far as it concerns the man of color. It does not appeal to him as a business proposition since it is hedged about by legal restraints. It is noteworthy and goes down to his everlasting credit that whenever and wherever he has been allowed voice or vote on prohibition, that voice has been generally lifted, and that vote has been cast and recorded on the side of law and order. He has been uncomplaining, has taken no concerted action, has entered no protest, and no studied and unified opposition to the 18th Amendment can be set to his account. No request or petition for modification, repeal or otherwise has emanated from him. While he, perhaps, is proportionately the greatest sufferer as a violator and an evil doer under the law, he cannot be charged with being the greatest malcontent.

Touched with all the feelings and infirmities of a man; heir to the propensities of a depraved and sinful nature; surrounded by the most powerful stimuli and manifold temptations, who wonders that he should at times fall victim to violating the prohibition law? I wish it distinctly understood that I enter no plea and make no apology for the shortcomngs of this man in living up to the requirements of this most philanthropic law. But I would like to see, and suggest that the rules of the game—fairness to all—be followed and applied in a matter so vital as determining the real attitude of the colored American to the 18th Amendment. I feel if this is done, the eye of suspicion which now rests so intently upon him will find time to turn in some other direction, and the suspicion that falls upon him as a standing menace to law and order will be perceptibly lifted. At any rate, it will do much to save him biting, bitter, and withering criticism, hasty and unrighteous judgment, harsh and undue censure. I plead for him no exception in the application and enforcement of the law. For already the American man of color has reaped by far the richest harvest of any other group wherever the law has been most rigidly applied and enforced. His contribution to good order in his local community and to the country at large, his advancement toward genuine and substantial citizenship, and his growing desire and dis-

position to participate in the larger and more general human concerns have been noticeably increased. His economic and civic relations and condition, and even religious status are all changing for the better.

Finally, since all that is herein claimed for him is true, he can be counted on to align himself with all the forces at work to save the country and conserve the principles of righteousness. He can be relied on to do his full bit in the prohibition crisis now before the country as he has done in all the past. The Church as such needs have no misgivings as to where her colored contituency stands on prohibition, if I have properly sensed and analyzed the attitude of the colored American to the 18th Amendment. For all this is remarkable, unique, enviable.

Yours for truth and fairness,

A. U. FRIERSON.

Lancaster, S. C.,
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